

## 2003 HUMAN BEHAVIOR COURSE BLOCK ONE CHALLENGES

2 QUESTIONS CHALLENGED

3 TOTAL CHALLENGES

1 CHANGE TO THE ANSWER KEY

### Question 26.

#### Question and Answer Key Answer.

Which of the following neurotransmitters is linked to anxiety disorders?

- A. **XX** Gama-aminobutyric acid (GABA)
- B. Benzodiazepine
- C. Serotonin
- D. Tryptophan
- E. Acetylcholine

#### Challenges.

1. According to the key, the correct answer should be GABA (answer A). Serotonin, however, is a neurotransmitter that is clearly linked to anxiety disorders. The lecture notes on page 50 specifically state that serotonin is linked to anxiety disorders, and this is a well-known association. Answer C is absolutely correct.
2. The question of concern asks what neurotransmitter is implicated in anxiety disorders. According, to table 6-1, GABA is listed as an associated neuropsychiatric disorder, and I believe this may have been one of the choices. However, serotonin was also a choice, and in slide 34 provided by Timothy Lacy for the Neurobiology of Mental Illness lecture, it states that dysregulation of serotonin is "implicated in the pathogenesis of schizophrenia, personality disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, ANXIETY DISORDERS, alcoholism, and chronic pain."

Since two different sources listed two of the possible choices to be implicated in anxiety disorders, I believe full credit should be given for both since we should not have to value one source as "more correct" than the other.

Dr. Engel Response. Correct answer is A or C. The challengers are correct so either response will be considered correct.

### Question 37.

#### Question and Answer Key Answer.

You are standing next to the medical school Dean and a fellow second year student approaches. As you watch, the Dean enthusiastically extends his hand in greeting to the student and exclaims, "Hello Jerry!" The student responds in kind and says, "Hi Dr..." A pause occurs that seems several seconds long. Finally, shaking his head, the student follows with, "...Laughlin!" The student looks slightly embarrassed. This pause in the student's speech is best described as

- A. Depersonalization
- B. Derailment
- C. **XX** Blocking
- D. A delusion
- E. Psychomotor retardation

#### Challenges.

1. The student's response could easily have been the result of psychomotor

retardation. There is not enough information given to definitively conclude that blocking is a better description of what has taken place than psychomotor retardation (answer E).

Dr. Engel Response. Correct answer is C. The question offers a classic description of blocking or thought blocking. Blocking is occasionally a symptom of a mental disorder, but it is a common and non-specific symptom even among non-ill individuals. Indeed, nearly all of us would admit that we have experienced blocking more than once in our lives.

The question does not ask for all answers that are possible. Instead, it asks for the 'best' descriptor for the occurrence. The question makes no indication that the student is mentally ill (delusions, psychomotor retardation, or depersonalization are usually indicators of a serious illness or a medication side-effect). A person who derails does not rapidly get back on track like the student in the example does.